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Dropout Prevention Important to Iowa Youth

Des Moines- The State of Iowa Youth Advisory Council (SIYAC) met last week at the State Capitol to advocate for dropout prevention measures in Iowa. Teaming with Iowa Jobs for America's Graduates (iJAG), SIYAC's 15 youth members held an audience with Governor Chet Culver and numerous legislators, including Senator Jack Hatch, Representative David Heaton, and Representative Phyllis Thede, to discuss different approaches for keeping Iowa's youth in school. SIYAC supported iJAG's program, currently effective in 24 schools across Iowa, and also delivered the Iowa Collaboration for Youth Development's (ICYD) annual report, which provides several recommendations to reach the goal of increasing Iowa's graduation rate to 95% by 2020.

Earlier this month, the Department of Education announced that the dropout rate in Iowa had risen in 2008 and that the achievement gap among minority youth, urban youth, and youth with disabilities was substantially higher than youth of other backgrounds.

This spring, SIYAC plans to continue an active role in dropout prevention efforts as well as with teen nutrition, substance abuse, and service initiatives throughout the state. For more information on SIYAC visit icyd.iowa.gov/SIYAC or email SIYAC@iowa.gov.

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